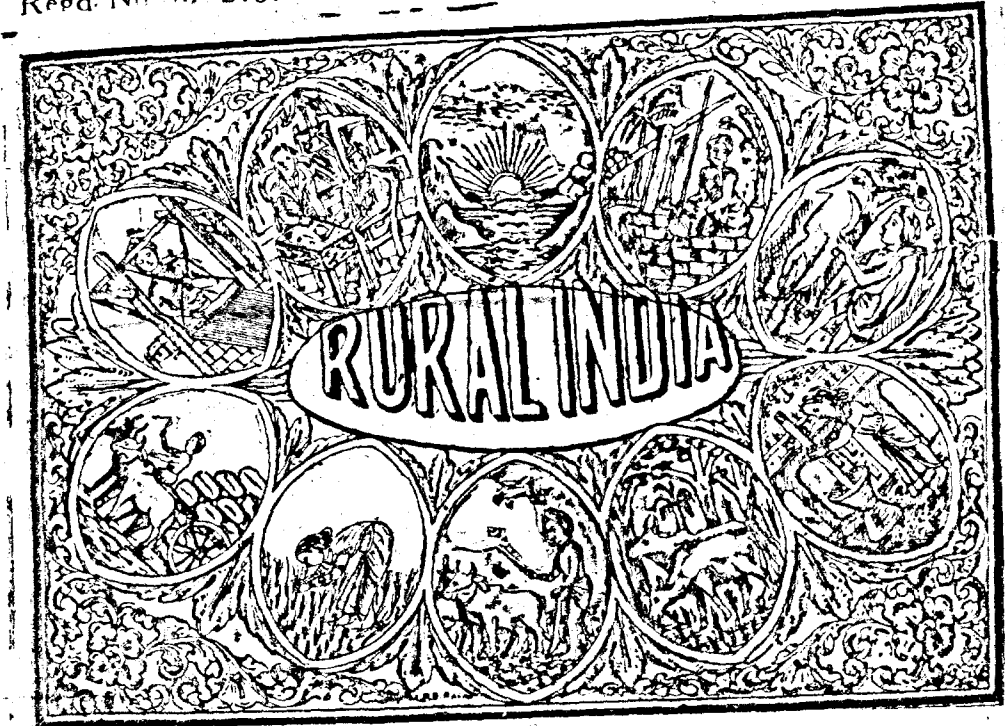




JOURNAL OF THE MADRAS FOREST PANCHAYATS

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FOREST PANCHAYATS.

Some observations on the draft standing order of the Board of Revenue.

(By G. Harisarvothama Rao, M. A.,)



THE PRELIMINARY REMARKS SET FORTH IN THE draft B.S.O. do not require much comment. It is conceded that the management of the forest areas useful solely or mainly for grazing purposes is outside the province of the Forest Department. It is also conceded that in these areas revenue is not the first consideration. If this profession of faith were put into practice in any material degree, one should have felt grateful to the Government. As a matter of fact the revenue and expenditure find a place in the Budget neither separately nor under the Revenue Department but under Forests. Appendices XIII and XIV in the present draft perpetuate this self-same system. The Forest Department holds the key to the situation and in the districts wherever the Forest Department and the Panchayats come into collusion the Panchayats have to go to the wall. The Government makes a clear profit out of the Panchayats of two lakhs of rupees and this goes to cover deficits under the whole Forest Department. The Forest Panchayats are bound to have only step-motherly attention as long as the Government does not give them a real place of dignity and attempts to be apologetic to the Forest Department and describes the Panchayats as designed merely to relieve the Forest Department of work.

In the organisation of Forest Panchayats the first fundamental question that has engaged the attention of those most affected and over which very grave anxiety has been expressed is the conduct of elections. Two points deserve careful consideration. The first is the authority for conducting the election. The second is the constitution of the electorate. After the administration of the Panchayats was

handed over to the Revenue Department the official most intimately connected with it has come to be the Deputy Tahsildar specially appointed. Whatever the language employed may be, whether it is that he should be present at the elections or that he should arrange for elections the fact remains that under present conditions in the country he is practically the person running the elections; for it is he that fixes the day, it is he that is believed to be giving notice by tom-tom and other measures incidental thereto and it is he that settles the electoral list. Since he has the initiative in all measures of administration affecting the Panchayats he has the greatest temptation, with the best will in the world so to manipulate elections as to be supreme in his authority over the population that is given to his care. Complaints have arisen in scores and that is why the Committee have attempted to tinker in the matter. The Government in their draft had left the Deputy Tahsildar supreme where he was. The Committee have just added a sentence recommending that "elections at renewal of agreements should be arranged for by the Divisional Officer (who may be the Panchayat Deputy Tahsildar)." What is the significance of this improvement upon such a vital question as this? Does the Committee seriously mean what it proposes? With the clause how can panchayats escape the Deputy Tahsildar? He is there again with a greater sanction behind him. His position is now recognised, if so long it was unrecognised. He was hitherto to be present at elections. Now he will run them at renewal of agreements. Why what was considered necessary as a safeguard at elections involving execution of agreements was not considered equally necessary at other elections is a mystery. No purpose is served by this weak amendment attempted by the committee. The Special Deputy Tahsildar shall have nothing to do with the elections. The Deputy Collector shall be required to arrange the elections through some other agency. Without this fundamental reform, the administration of Forest Panchayats can never be purified. That the committee has been able to carry an amendment stating that there are obvious advantages in retaining the village as a unit of Panchayat administration does not in any way help materially the purity of the Panchayat administration; for, where the Forest area is fairly large or of a fairly good quality it is neither right nor possible to exclude adjoining villages from the benefits of such a forest.

That the improvement the Committee has attempted to make is a mere eye-wash is evident from the wording of Rule 3 which remains unchanged. The Deputy Tahsildar is, according to this rule, the person that has to inspect the reserve with the villagers, explain the working of the panchayat system. He has to hold elections and then

explain the nature of the agreement. If he is free to do all this at the original agreement one does not see why he should perchance be replaced at renewals. The second important point in the elections, "the electorate" is not directly dealt with either by the Government or by the committee. We have indirectly to infer it by the reference to the distribution of the seats on the panchayats in proportion to the number of animals sent for grazing and from item (9) in appendix XX. The question of the electorate bristles with difficulties at present. The Deputy Tahsildar is a law unto himself. Whomsoever he considers as possessing animals sent to grazing is a voter. Whomsoever he declines to so consider is not entitled to vote. Grazing permits are believed to be the basis upon which the Deputy Tahsildar proceeds. To allow current year's permit to be the basis would lead to all corrupt practices. Some would not have taken permits by the time the Deputy Tahsildar is on, some would still be taking, some might make a rush and take just for the sake of elections while others are denied. Many things may happen which give an undue advantage to people who enjoy official favour. If permits should form the basis, the previous year's permit register should be made the standard authority. It would be probably better to include all owners of all animals in the village and ask them to register themselves before a particular date. That would really help the panchayats to enforce due compliance with rules of permit-issue and earn the maximum income. However, the ideal arrangement would be to include all land-owners and animal-owners in such a list as after all, every land-owner is a potential animal owner and he is in addition interested in the forest area about him because he has to depend upon it for his fuel, agricultural implements, manure leaves, and quarry material for his household purposes, etc., etc. It is really cruel that the ordinary villager who has so much need of the forests should be denied the right to vote at the Forest Panchayat Elections merely because he has not in his possession animals to graze.

The agreement is at present the bedrock on which the administration of the Forest Panchayat rests. It is bound to have a predominating influence as long as the Government does not release its grip on the income it intends to make out of the Panchayat. The amount to be settled on a Panchayat is according to this draft B. S. O., its gross income including (1) grazing fees; (2) income out of minor Forest Produce; (3) income by sale of Tangedu bark; (4) income by sale of fuel coupes; (5) income, if any, from quarries; (6) Mutarpha and owner's fees on Abkari trees and (7) Proceeds of timber permits, if allowed to be issued by the Collector—minus; (a) Watcher's pay; (b) cost of such

improvements as can profitably be done during the course of the year; (c) cost of maintaining boundary marks and lines and (d) a reasonable amount for contingencies. This last item of expenditure (d) has been added at the instance of the Committee which passed the draft B. S. O. and items, (a) and (b) on the income side also have been similarly added. So far as the additions go they should be there. Compounding fees and fines collected in court do not find a mention on the income side of the Panchayats. Why, when the Government takes an agreement for a specified contract sum, these legitimate items of income should again go to the Government it is difficult to understand. These must be handed over to the panchayats and their finance improved. The committee's proposal that 50 per cent. of the compounding fees should go to a central fund, 25% to the individual panchayats, and 25 per cent. to the Government, takes away really the essence from the individual Panchayats that contribute mainly to these fees. If the Committee's proposal may be accepted in outline the individual Panchayat should be given 50 per cent. and the central funds and the Government may get 25 per cent. each out of the remainder. The more important aspect that should be remembered, however, is, that this system of agreement is extremely inelastic and deprives the Panchayat of freedom of movement and probably the District Collector also of much of the freedom which he now possesses. Since the Panchayat is bound to pay the amount stipulated, it has no margin left to exercise discretion during a bad season and allow free-grazing. As no provision is made either in the present draft or elsewhere empowering the District Collector to remit any portion of the stipulated amount he cannot possibly interfere. In Government Reserves he has to-day the fullest power to order free-grazing. To be under a Panchayat is to lose this very great advantage and that arises out of the inelasticity of the agreements. The most wonderful part of this agreemental arrangement is this.

In appendix II which is the form of agreement prescribed, item 9 mentions that the profits of the Panchayat shall be utilised first for the improvement of the village Forest and then for any work of general utility to the Panchayat villages. When the B. S. O. fixes all sources of income, when it fixes equally all sources of expenditure, and when it declared practically the balance as assessment to be paid to Government, how this laudable object of getting profits has to be achieved not only for the general improvement of the Forest but also for works of general utility to the Panchayat villages is impossible to understand. It must be specially noted that the Committee that sat to consider this draft had to include in the estimates of expenditure "a reasonable amount for contingencies." If there can be no profits for

contingencies to come certainly there cannot be profits to devote to these more extensive objects mentioned in this wonderful form of agreement. Probably all this pious hope is expected to be realised if at renewals the Government does not choose to increase the assessment on account of any increase of income derived from the Panchayats' improved management. Even this possibility is one that arises on account of an amendment the committee has made in the draft prepared by the Board that the assessment should not ordinarily be increased, over which the attitude of the Government is not yet known. If the Panchayats cannot be trusted with the management of Forest areas without an agreement, the best way to get out of the difficulty would be to create a reserve fund of half the proceeds of the Panchayat after meeting the expenses and allowing the Reserve Fund to be drawn upon by the Panchayat, after obtaining sanction from the Collector to meet extra-ordinary situations. The amount of the agreement may be lowered in the sum that must go to the Reserve Fund. In regard to the grazing rates the Government should not be allowed to go behind the recommendation made by the Committee. Forest panchayat areas are decidedly of a poorer nature than Government Reserves. They are in some cases no more than some hundreds of acres and vary materially different in quality ranging from poor to poorest. Therefore perfect freedom in levying the rates should be given to the panchayats. As nowhere can a Forest Panchayat be better or richer than a Government Reserve an enhancement of rates over Local Government rates must be treated as a special business and therefore the committee has rightly insisted upon the previous sanction of the Collector. One sentence, however, in the Draft B. S. O. on grazing rates cannot be too strongly condemned. It says that in fixing the rates it must be remembered that the revenue of the Panchayat must be such as to permit of the proper protection and development of the reserve in addition of the payment of an assessment to the Government. This, after the committee was able to substitute the words "payment of an assessment" for the original words "payment of a reasonable assessment." One wonders what all this means. If a reserve is unable to support, after meeting ordinary charges, the payment of an assessment to the Government, the Government must forego the assessment. Instead of disafforesting the area and allowing it to be used by the people without any restriction, the restriction of management by a Panchayat brings its own advantage and the Government must be satisfied with it.

The way in which Panchayats are dealt with under the items of agreement is reflected in the provisions relating to the sale of fuel

coupes. The Pancaayat Fuel Coupes, according to this B. S. O, fall into two groups—Fuel Coupes intended to serve the local needs of the Panchayat area and fuel coupes of a commercial character. The smaller coupes are designed to be 10 to 15 acres in extent depending on the size of the Forest. A set of separate rules governs their management (Appendix XX!). The restrictions placed on these coupes are such that no great advantage will accrue to the coupes concerned. In a Panchayat area not more than one coupe of the size mentioned should be worked. 10 to 15 acres without reference to the growth in it, without reference to the total area, without reference to the total population to be served, is a wonderful recipe for Panchayat to manage. Fancy, these coupes after being felled should be kept closed for 10 years whereas the second class—the commercial class should be closed for at least five years. Why this difference—echo must answer why? The Collector has to sanction a working plan. These 10 or 15 acres should be divided into 4 quarters and each quarter should be completed before the second is taken up. The provision that contracts should not be given is probably healthy; but the Forest Panchayats cannot issue permits to the ryots to fell for their necessities. Cooly must be paid to make things dearer. For these small coupes, within the area of the Panchayats with complete local knowledge, the galling provision of permits for removal is insisted on. With so many restrictions, the B. S. O. is not satisfied. The Panchayat may not choose the plot. It may not cut the lines of demarcation. All this work is reserved for the Deputy Tahsildar. If you turn to the rules and agreements governing the second class of coupes—the commercial coupes—you come upon worse ground. The Forest Department is fully in evidence. The sale proceeds should be credited to the Government. To compensate for loss of grazing fees in the area closed after felling, the Panchayat has to be paid a percentage commission. The working plan has to be settled by the District Forest Officer. The words 'is necessary' are there. If small coupes require working plans sanctioned by the Collector, what this will amount to in working is easily guessed. For the removal of produce, form books stamped by the District Forest Officer must be bought. The District Forest Officer has to prescribe or prohibit the road that the contractor should or should not use within the limits of the Panchayat Reserve. The first officer to whom accidents of fire should be reported is the Forest Officer. The contractor has to comply with the provisions of the Madras Forest Act, and all rules in force thereunder and the contract is subject in all respects to such Act and rules i. e. the Forest Officer has full jurisdiction once a Panchayat runs a fuel coupe of the commer-

cial type. The Forest Panchayat is an agent of the Forest Department receiving from between 30 and 50 per cent. of the sale proceeds of the coupe for loss sustained by fall in grazing fee as also by expenditure incidental to felling of the coupe. Not more than a fortieth of the area of the Panchayat reserve can be worked per year under a plan. Why the Panchayat and the Revenue Department should not be the sole masters is a matter for careful scrutiny. The autonomy attempted to be given to the Panchayat with one hand should not be taken away from them with the other.

There is but one point that has to be noticed in relation to this section. It is stated that the Panchayatdars present in the village should accompany inspecting officers. While it may be true that without the aid of Panchayatdars and their co-operation the Deputy Tahsildar may not be able to do much, it is equally true that no galling conditions should be laid on Panchayatdars who are after all honorary officers. Under cover of this requisition that the Panchayatdars should accompany the inspecting officers, cases have not been wanting where Deputy Tahsildars have made it a point of honour for them to demand attendance of Presidents of Panchayats and on failure have made it a matter for complaints that have ended in the dismissal of the President. The provision has to be made less discourteous. Wherever an inspecting officer visits, the Panchayat may ordinarily depute one of its members to help the Deputy Tahsildars. That is the best that can be done.

The provision in regard to the deposit of monies is very vague. The President is expected to deposit in the nearest co-operative or savings bank any sum in excess of immediate needs. Co-operative Credit Societies are very largely available but Co-operative Banks, i. e., Societies that function as banks also are few and far between, Savings Banks are much fewer still and in districts like mine. S. B. account is not a possibility sometimes within a distance of 20 miles. When the President is authorised to deposit and withdraw at will for immediate needs whatever that may mean, the question of depositing may be less mandatory.

That the legal status of the Panchayats and matters relating to offences and punishments should have formed a part of miscellaneous matter proves what position the Panchayats hold in the mind of the framers of this document. When the panchayat is constituted it has no legal status except that of a contractor bound to pay the amount stipulated. The whole legal status vests in the Revenue Department of which the Deputy Tahsildar is the autocratic agent. A Panchayat which works properly may be given legal status i. e., each member

appointed a "Forest Officer" to exercise powers under substantial sections of the Forest Act. Until that is done who exercises these powers is a question that remains unanswered in the draft B. S. O. The definition of a Forest Officer under the Forest Act includes any person appointed by name or as holding an office to discharge any of the functions of a Forest Officer under this Act or any rule made thereunder. If the Deputy Tahsildar and the watchers derive powers under this definition equally do the panchayats, except the power of compounding offences which must be specially bestowed. The Panchayat-dars are called upon by the very agreement to do duties of Forest officers. Why special confirmation of legal status is contemplated for the panchayatdars is a matter that is not clear. If explicit legal provision is necessary in behalf of Forest Panchayats, it should be made for the whole lot of people concerned from the District Collector downwards to the watcher, because, none of these is an original Forest Officer exercising powers under the Forest Act. The power to compound offences shall be dealt with later. But, to appoint a panchayat and not give it the status of an ordinary Forest Officer is tantamount to a denial of the fundamental right for which panchayat is formed. The Government might much better hand over these Forest areas to the Deputy Tahsildar for management without the intervention of the panchayats.

Provisions relating to offences i.e., compounding also are very badly made and drafted in the B. S. O. The panchayat is required to report offences involving a value of Rs. 50 and under to the Deputy Tahsildar and offences of value of over Rs. 50 or involving prosecution to the Revenue Divisional Officer. This, however, is not carried out in the form of agreement given in appendix XII, para 10 (viii) thereof says that the panchayat shall report to the Tahsildar any offence for which prosecution is desired. Again the body of the B. S. O. states that the Deputy Tahsildar alone is fit to pass orders. What happens to cases reported to the Divisional Officer is not mentioned in the B.S.O. Where the panchayat is conceded the power of compounding, the limits of the compounding fee are fixed at three times for grazing and felling offences and at five times in cases of goat-browsing. This is the amendment made by the Committee. This standard must be insisted on not only for compounding levied by panchayats but also for compounding levied by other authorities. The draft B. S. O. is not clear as to whether these rates of maxima have to be observed by other authorities. The draft should be so amended as to make this plain.

There is one grave matter to which attention has to be drawn. The agreement includes in its provisions a clause that the Revenue

Divisional Officer shall have power with the previous approval of the Collector to remove any panchayatdar and that order shall be final. Why the farce of an election should take place for appointment if the Revenue Divisional Officer can remove any elected man without as much as a complaint by his compeers and an expression of opinion by them or even an appeal to a tribunal higher than he who punishes. This is a very extraordinary provision and it should go or be substituted by something more in keeping with democratic notions of life.

In conclusion I must state that the draft standing order is loosely drawn, highly imperfect and very unsatisfactory. If the Government has any regard for popular opinion and rights, a very much improved draft will have again to be published before the B. S. O. takes a final shape.

RURAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

A suggested scheme.

By Mr. Bhikhalal Bhaichand Kapasi, B. A., (Bombay).

IT IS UNIVERSALLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT rural education is a dire necessity for the uplift of the agricultural population of India. Education is not literary instruction but the training of the mind for a specified purpose. It is necessary, therefore, to train the poor peasants for the specified purpose of bringing home to them new and novel methods of cultivation, marketing etc. etc. Intellectual interaction is necessary for a broader outlook and a generalised scheme. It has been recognised on all hands that the development of rural education is the only sure foundation on which to build an efficient and a stable rural life. The very fact that the bulk of the people of India live on agriculture necessitates the inauguration of cheap and a workable scheme for diffusing the light of knowledge amongst the sons of the soil.

It is a tragedy that we spend much and get less in education. Our present system of education is anti-educational. In Japan there are two courses (1) Literary (2) Technical or Specialised. The boys of Japan take mostly the latter course while Indians have a preference for the former. There is very little of scientific instruction and no sign of specialised course. The decay of once prosperous villages is ascribed to their desertion by the educated and the well-to-do people, who prefer urban life to a rural one.

In Germany, boys are trained in religion, good conduct and "general knowledge and requirements of civic life". Vocational training has been a success and the system of continuation schools is gaining ground. The policy of education is consecutive as well as constructive. An American writer says "Agricultural education is the most widely and energetically cultivated form of industrial education in this country at the present time." There is a separate department of Land Economics in U. S. A. In France and Denmark, rural education has made good progress. Agricultural, botany as well as biology are given importance. The recent progress of Russia has been very remarkable mainly due to the development of rural education.

India is a nation of farmers. The curriculum of rural schools should be such as to deal with agricultural conditions and needs of India. Co-operation between agriculture and education is therefore necessary. Education and environment should be complementary and supplementary. The capacity of the teaching staff should be above the average to ensure the thorough success of any scheme for the development of rural education. The following suggestions are put forward for further discussion:—

- (1) Co-operation between the educational and the agricultural departments.
- (2) Teachers should be trained in scientific agriculture and a. b. c. of systematic teaching is necessary.
- (3) Establishment of demonstration farms and plots under experts.
- (4) Elements of Rural Economic Conditions to be thoroughly studied.
- (5) A village or a group of villages should start a school with the following subjects:—
 - (1) Vernacular (2) Arithmetic (3) Geography (4) Agriculture (5) Marketing (6) History.
- (6) The curriculum of rural and urban education should be quite different.
- (7) Training schools for teachers to serve in rural areas should be established under an expert staff.
- (8) There should be model schools in every province.
- (9) The educated section of the villagers should go to villages and live with the people and endeavour to improve their conditions.
- (10) A Magazine should be started in every province in the vernaculars of that province.
- (11) There should be an All-India Magazine like "Rural India" to co-ordinate provincial effort.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

WASTE PRODUCTS OF THE FARM. The Groundnut is an important commercial crop yielding *punnac* (meal) useful as cattle feed and manure and oil. The oil forms the base in the manufacture of several commercial products, eg. soaps, candles etc. But this does not exhaust the commercial value of the groundnut. The waste shells are used as fuel and sometimes as manure also. In the U. S. A., attempts have been made to utilise the waste shells more economically. They contain 3 to 4 per cent fat and 6 to 8 per cent protein of which 70 per cent is digestible. The low nutrient value prevents their use as feeding stuffs although they have been mixed with certain concentrated cattle foods as roughage. The relatively high content of pentosan and cellulose in the waste shell could also be used as material for the manufacture of paper at a cost comparable with that of the products of such materials as corn stalks, corn cobs and bagasse now being employed for that purpose.

Another waste product of the farm is the Sugarcane trash. The use of sugar cane trash is evidently not much appreciated in our country. No doubt it is used as fuel in the manufacture of gur jaggery. But canetrash has also effect on nitrification in the soil. Some experiments carried out in *Porto Rico* (see Ann-rept-Insular Experiment station, 1927-28.) seem to suggest that the addition of trash lowers the level of nitrate concentration in the soil, while the addition of sulphate of ammonia raises the level of nitrate concentration even though energy supplying material is added at the rate of 15 tons of air-dried trash to the acre. Trash should not be ploughed under a short time before planting unless a nitrogenous fertiliser such as ammonium sulphate is also added.

IMPROVED BONE CRUSHER. The Imperial Council of Agricultural Research has offered a prize of Rs 3,500 for the design of an improved bone crusher to be driven by a small engine and suitable for the production of finely ground bone meal for manurial purposes. The prize is open to all irrespective of caste, creed or nationality and government servants are eligible to compete for it subject to the consent of the Government under which they are employed.

A NEW USE FOR POTATOES. According to an Hamburg correspondent to the Madras Mail, Germany has discovered a new use for potatoes. In order to help the farmers (potato growers especially), the gasoline distributing Companies of Germany have been compelled to mix motor spirits in such a way that 3 per cent of the total must be alcohol made from agricultural and forest products.

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A WISE REGULATION. The Government of Mysore have declared that no leper in the state shall personally prepare for sale or sell any article of food or drink or any drugs or clothing intended for human use. No leper shall bathe or wash clothes at or take water from any public well or tank debarred by the Municipal or local bye-laws from use by lepers. No leper shall drive, conduct or ride in any public carriage plying for hire other than railway carriage or exercise any trade or calling which in the opinion of an Inspector of lepers is likely to spread infection.

AN AYURVEDIC DISPENSARY IN MADRAS. The Hon'ble the Chief Minister, Dewan Bahadur B. Muniswami Nayudu opened the other day, a Corporation Ayurvedic Dispensary in Thousand Lights, Madras. This is the first Ayurvedic Dispensary to be opened by the Corporation of Madras. The Late Rajah of Panagal when he was the chief Minister energetically spread the idea of the encouragement of the Ayurvedic system of medicine which has its votaries like the other systems. If the new Corporation dispensary proved the success it was expected to be, more dispensaries of the kind are likely to be opened not only in the city of Madras but also by the municipalities and other Local bodies in the Presidency. Considering how woefully deficient is the medical relief available to the rural peoples, it is to be hoped that some relief whether it is based on the Ayurvedic or the Unani system is made available to them instead of their having to go without medical relief altogether.

A PROGRESSIVE VILLAGE. What Vishnupet in the Trichinopoly District has been able to achieve many another village can successfully attempt. By concerted action and a spirit of give and take, a long-standing irrigation dispute has been solved and the village is now able to command an adequate water supply for the irrigation of 400 to 500 acres of land. There is a Panchayat in the village which has been strenuously working for the betterment of village administration. The experimental post office started in the village early this year has been made permanent and the provision of other amenities are being enthusiastically canvassed by the villagers.

THOSE MONKEYS. Monkeys not domesticated are a great nuisance to the householder, the farmer and the orchardist and nothing in the field or the fruit garden escapes their attentions. They are known to raid fields, poultry yards etc. The worst of the monkey tricks are reported from a Chinese Province where according to the villagers, the monkeys are chasing horses into the hills. In some cases,

the monkeys it is said even lead the patient pack animals into remote mountain meadows. Like the Hindus, Japanese mountaineers and pious Buddhists seldom molest the wild monkeys. The utmost that the peasants in this country attempt is to escape the damage caused by the monkeys by chasing them away. When a gang of monkeys raid on a field or a fruit garden they are with the aid of *Irulars* and *Vettakorans* caught alive in the night and transported to a place distant from the scene of their damage. Frightening the monkeys by firing sky rockets and buck-shots is sometimes attempted but it is not quite satisfactory in scaring away the monkeys.

CO-OPERATION AND SOCIAL REFORM. We have repeatedly been urging that there is no limit to the variety of objects which can be undertaken through co-operative enterprise. We recently referred to certain special types of societies which are successfully worked in Travancore and Cochin. These are non-credit societies for definite purposes, eg., societies for purchase and sale of seed, manure and agricultural products, societies for the protection of crops, societies for arbitrating village disputes, societies for running village schools, societies for distribution of irrigation water etc. The application of the Co-operative principle for carrying on social reform is more difficult and we are glad to note the success that has been achieved by the Unza co-operative society in Baroda State which has devoted itself to social reform by carrying on a crusade against needless social extravagance among the Audich Brahmins. This one society has been the means of saving for its members over eleven lakhs of rupees. There seems to be strong and growing feeling among members and non-members against extravagance and this is a very healthy sign. This commendable example of this Baroda Society deserves to be widely known and followed. In order that there may be an all-round advance in these desirable directions three things are necessary as stated by Mr. S. K. Ganguli the other day in his Presidential address to the Bengal Provincial Conference. First there should be a wide extension of general education amongst the vast mass of the people. Secondly training in the principles and practice of co-operation should be imparted to all persons connected with the co-operative societies. Thirdly arrangements should be made for the training of experts for the management of various types of co-operative societies.

COURTESY TO VILLAGE OFFICERS. The Collector of South Arcot has issued the following circular:— "The Collector writes to

impress on Tahsildars, Deputy Tahsildars, and the Taluk establishments, clerical and in the field, the necessity and propriety of treating the village officers with the courtesy and consideration to which their position as village officers entitles them. They are not to be dragged to headquarters unnecessarily or detained there without very good reasons. The Tahsildar will be held responsible for the observance of this order in his Taluk by his subordinates." The circular is all right. It is the spirit in which the rules are worked that counts. Village officers are not ordinary likely to complain and it is therefore all the more necessary on the part of the superior officers that the rules are observed both in the letter and in the spirit.

LOW PRICES OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE. We are now passing through a period of low prices of grains and food stuffs with large stocks which are unwanted, combined with extraordinary depression in trade. Notice of a resolution on the subject has been given for the next session of the U. P. Legislative Council. In that province the price of wheat has been reduced to the lowest possible ebb and it is now possible to get three or four times the quantity of grain and flour as could be bought for a given price not many months ago. The case is especially so with wheat, the price of which is now lower than it ever has been for the last 30 years and the farmers are experiencing great difficulty in meeting Government demands. Added to this is the distressing dumping of Russian wheat which admittedly is the immediate cause of the present low prices in wheat. In the Madras Presidency also the era low prices has already begun to be seriously felt. Paddy, groundnut, in fact every other product of the field is sold at a phenomenally low price. Farmers will find it difficult to pay the Government dues. Wages and the cost of cultivation have not shown a downward tendency. What about the remedies? Prohibiting the importation of foreign wheat and other food grains into India may be only a temporary palliative. The root cause of the present condition should be attacked. The Legislative Council of Cochin State took the only common sense step when it asked the Durbar to institute an enquiry into the present conditions and apply suitable remedies. That way lies the approach to the proper solution of the problem.

There was recently rioting in Burma. According to an interview published in the Daily Telegraph, the Burmese delegate to the Round Table Conference is of the opinion that the riots are due to economic, not political causes and was due to discontent owing to the extra-ordi-

narly low price of rice. He has expressed the view that unless the rice question is tackled in the same way as the wheat problem had been dealt with by the Government of Australia and Canada, the trouble in Burma would become much more serious.

The west Coast which is an important market for copra, ginger, pepper, and cashew nuts, is similarly feeling the effect of low prices. Unprecedentedly low prices have for some time been the normal feature of the pepper market and with the arrival of the new crop, prices are expected to go down still further unless there are large foreign takings. The ginger market is also declining every day. During the past few years, America has been taking cashew nuts in large quantities but there is no demand for it now. The copra and oil market is also going down owing to lack of demand.

A silver lining in the otherwise depressing situation is that Indian cotton as a marketable world commodity seems to be increasing rapidly in popularity. Japanese grey goods have been underselling Lancashire grey goods in India, for the reason, it would appear that Japan used a far greater mixture of Indian cotton in cloth than Lancashire did. Evidently Lancashire is contemplating a larger admixture of Indian with American cotton in the manufacture of coarse grey goods.

The hide and skin and tanning industry is evidently threatened with a further decline owing to the contemplated preference in foreign markets for rubber as a substitute for leather for soleing chiefly on account of its low cost, it being claimed that synthetic rubber soles are damp proof and also air proof while it is asserted that the wearing and wet resisting qualities of sole leather used in the manufacture of all kinds of boots and shoes are not satisfactory.

THE MYSORE CIVIL VETERINARY DEPARTMENT. There are some interesting points to notice in the Report on the administration of the Mysore Civil Veterinary department for 1929-30. There are as many as fiftyseven hospitals and dispensaries in the state and it is gratifying to note that the work of the department is being increasingly appreciated by the public as evidenced by the insistent demands from all parts of the state for the opening of more dispensaries backed up by offers of assistance by Local bodies and private persons. Three dispensary buildings gifted by philanthropic gentlemen were opened during the year and two more are reported to be under constructions. Out of

90 cattle fairs held during the year, the staff of the Veterinary department attended 85, opening temporary dispensaries wherever possible for the treatment of sick animals.

A HYDERABAD FARMING ASSOCIATION. The newly inaugurated Hyderabad Farming Association is stating an Anglo-Urdu Journal dealing with crops mainly grown in the State and with problems which farmers have to face. Special articles will be contributed by the Director of Agriculture and his staff and tour and inspection notes of the Director-General and the Director will be included. Members of the Association will always be invited to any demonstration held by the department on its farms and the department is anxious to secure the help and co-operation of persons with influence who could help to convince the cultivators of the soundness of their recommendations and members of the association can also arrange to have demonstration in their lands. In these and other ways the members would easily get into touch with the officers of the Department and obtain help and assistance from them. The Government of H. E. H. the Nizam will it is understood place at the disposal of the Association a large sum of money to be used as grants in aid to members of the association who are willing to grow pure feed and allow portions of their lands to be used as small demonstration plots and farms. We would like to see the department of Government in charge of Forest Panchayats in this Presidency follow the good example of Hyderabad and come into intimate and human touch with the Forest Panchayat-dars' Union and its official organ "RURAL INDIA" and through them encourage the Panchayats in the proper discharge of their duties and improve the forests entrusted to their care and by the careful husbanding of their income provide themselves with all the amenities they need.

THE ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY. We understand that from the next academic year, a new course in Economics will be introduced and a feature of this course will be the study of co-operation and Rural Economics. When the University was inaugurated we recommended this step and we are gratified to note that the University has recognised the importance of such studies in a predominantly agricultural country like India and lost no time in deciding to introduce courses in Co-operation and Rural Economics.



REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

RELIGION OF BURMA. By Bhikkhu Ananda Mettayya. The Theosophical Publishing House have been issuing under the title "The Asian Library" a series of books, with the two fold purpose of discovering to Indians the extent and glory of the culture for which they are responsible and to the level of which they must rise and of giving to the world at large a knowledge of that culture which makes for the regeneration and permanent elevation of humanity. The 14th. Volume in the series deals with Buddhism as professed by the people of Burma. The volume contains essays on the subject contributed by the late Mr. Allen Bennet, an Englishman, who embraced Buddhism and lived as a Buddhist monk by the name of Ananda Mettayya in Ceylon and Burma for some years before he returned to England to propagate the gospel of Buddha in that country. He did much good work in introducing Buddhism to the West before his death which took place in 1923. The essays are written in graceful and eloquent style explaining the main doctrines of Buddhism. The author is an adherent of Southern Buddhism which he considers contained the teachings of the Buddhism in its pristine purity, and he brings to bear by his knowledge of the science of the West in elucidating the truths of that religion. We heartily recommend the volume to modern educated men and women who wish to have a glimpse of Buddhism which is the religion of millions of people in Asia.

SOUTH INDIAN MUSIC SERIES. We have received the book II of the series by Mr. P. Sambamurthi Lecturer in Indian music, Queen Mary's College, Madras. It deals with the elements of Karnatic music in detail. The subjects of *raga* and *tala* classification have been dealt with at length. A chapter on folk music and one on musical instruments are also added. We have no doubt the book will be highly useful to students of South Indian music. The part is priced annas eight and is available at the Indian Music Publishing House, 2, Bunder Street, G. T. Madras.

TEMPLE BELLS. (Association Press, Calcutta, Price Rs. 1-12-0.) Under the above heading, Dr. A. J. Appaswamy M. A. D. Phil., has published a book of selections in English from the Religious Literature of India to meet the needs of Christian readers. The book is intended to enable Christians to understand the heart of the religious experience of non-Christians in India and in it are collected under appropriate headings, thoughts about God, man and the world culled, from the writings of men who have sought after God. The Bishop of

Madras has added a neat preface to the Volume. The contents in the book are chiefly confined to Marathi, Hindi, Bengali, and Tamil saints and there are also selections from Sanskrit sources such as the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. The translations of the extracts are good. Short biographies of authors are appended in the introductory chapter. The volume is illustrated with fine reproductions of paintings of eminent artists. The book deserves to be studied both by Christians and Hindus.

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1. STOTRA MALA—A GARLAND OF HINDU PRAYERS.
2. DASOPANT DIGAMBAR.
3. BAHINA BAI.

Rev. Justin E. Abbott, D. D., an American missionary who spent many years of his life in Maharashtra and has now returned to his native land has been publishing a series of translations of the works of the poet saints of that country. He is one of those few missionaries who have been catholic in their views and considered Hinduism as one of the great religions of the world. To him humanity has a common heart though this truth is not always remembered in the actual relationship of man with man and the feelings of the heart are the same under the same conditions, though when expressed the form differs. He finds in the school of thought to which the Maharashtra poet saints belonged, the same longing of the heart after God as is to be found among the Christian saints and his acquaintance with the work of those saints has enabled him to understand the true spirit of Hinduism. He has been translating their works as a labour of love and he seeks for no other reward than that a better understanding of Hindu heart should prevail in the West and that the Indian should be truly known, loved and honored by the rest to the world.

The 1st Volume, is a collection of prayers of Maharashtra saints translated into English. It contains also the originals in Maharashtra and a useful glossary in English explaining religious and metaphysical terms for the benefit of Western readers. The prayers cover so many aspects of a Hindu hearts' desire as to throw light on many of their deeper feelings and thus help to a better understanding of their bhakti (love of God). Dr. Abbott has added a well written preface explaining the scope of the prayers and also a brief account of each saint's life.

The second volume contains translations and originals of the history of the life of the poet saint known as Dasopant Digambar, who lived from 1551 to 1615 A. D.

The third volume contains the autobiography and verses of the woman poet saint Bahina Bai who is believed to have been born in 1628 A. D. and died in 1700 A. D. The Maharashtra people can point with pride to many of their poet saints who were women of literary ability, wise in philosophy and godly in character. Among these is Bahina Bai. She felt the handicap of being a woman even in that age and denied a freedom of study and speech that men enjoyed. She ~~how-~~ ever overcame these difficulties and recorded the outpourings of her heart in her verses. The volumes are all neatly printed at the Scottish Mission Industries Co., Ltd., Poona., and the get up is excellent.



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